



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FORMER BRANSON SCHOOL EMPLOYEE PLEADS GUILTY TO EMBEZZLING \$50,000 FROM BRANSON SCHOOL DISTRICT

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that a former employee of the Branson, Mo., R-IV School District pleaded guilty in federal court today to embezzling more than \$50,000 from the school district.

Janette McSpadden, 41, of Branson, pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Richard E. Dorr this morning.

By pleading guilty, **McSpadden** admitted that she abused a position of public and private trust in a manner that significantly facilitated the commission and concealment of the offenses contained in a four-count indictment, which was returned by a federal grand jury on Aug. 12, 2004, in Springfield. **McSpadden** pleaded guilty to each of the four counts.

Specifically, **McSpadden** admitted that she embezzled money from the Branson School District on four separate occasions – a fraud that resulted in a loss exceeding \$50,000, Graves said.

McSpadden admitted that she embezzled more than \$10,000 four times from the Branson school district during four different time periods. The first term of embezzlement took place from Oct. 11, 2000 to Dec. 7, 2000, the second took place during the calendar year 2001, the third during calendar year 2002, and the fourth between Feb. 2003, to July 26, 2003.

Under federal statutes, Graves explained, **McSpadden** could be subject to a sentence up to 10 years in federal prison without parole, plus a fine up to \$250,000, for each of the four counts. A sentencing hearing will be scheduled after the completion of a presentence investigation by the United States Probation Office.

This case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Taney County, Mo., Sheriff's Department.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at
www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow